

CLAIMS

1. A method of providing conferencing services in an expandable telecommunications system having a plurality of nodes including switching nodes and conferencing nodes, said conferencing nodes having digital signal processing (DSP) cards each including individual DSP circuits which have a predetermined amount of conferencing resources capable of performing a conference comprised of a number of channels, and said switching nodes and said conferencing nodes being in a communicating relationship by an inter-nodal network and a host coupled to at least one node for controlling the system in which the conferencing resources are utilized by one or more nodes participating in a conference, said method comprising the steps of:

- (A) in response to a request to perform conferencing services at a first node, determining the conference type of the requested conference;
- (B) depending upon the type of conference, transmitting a resource locate message to identify the DSP circuit which has available conferencing resources that are appropriate for the conference type;
- (C) assigning the conference to that identified DSP circuit and instructing that DSP circuit to reserve conferencing resources for that requested conference; and

PATENT
104005-0111

- 25 (D) restricting the future creation of additional conferences on that
DSP circuit, if the created conference is a critical conference.

Add A1)